

2018 Election Wrap Up

In the last several meetings, you have heard staff reports with a lot of detailed information on how the election went in 2018. I want to provide a wrap-up and then answer any questions so we can finish out the Board's tenure with any closing thoughts or questions on how the election went.

Improvements

- First, and foremost, we kept up to our standard in timely reporting of election results. In 2018, 99.01% of results were received by 11 PM versus 98.13% in 2016.

Information Technology

- Equipment was correctly deployed for the election met State Board protocols for security
- When our turnout was higher than projected during early voting, we notified the State Board that we needed additional equipment and received the balance of state's inventory, six DS 200 scanners and an additional high speed scanner for the canvass.
- Our security requirements mean that our IT staff has to be perfectionist about providing security seal information on the paperwork that our IT staff sends out to polling places. Staff implemented procedures that improved accuracy in 2018:
 - For the Electronic Pollbooks, their accuracy improved to 100% from 99.83% in 2016 election
 - For the Scanners, the accuracy rate improved to 99.99% from 98.86% in 2016

Election Judges

- The recruiters met their targets and were prepared to exceed them when the turnout required it during early voting. They responded adjusting for daily changes in voter turnout as we kept asking for more and more workers.
- We achieved a 95% satisfaction rating from judges on their training and a 93% rating from voters on the service received.
- Our no-show rate continued to be low at 2% in comparison to a national average that we have heard is as high as 20%.
- Jessica Jones took on new responsibilities, successfully training the recruiting staff and managing the EV recruiting and training process.
- Adjustments to the processes and training were made so that all precincts were fully staffed with chief judges
- We continued to decrease the average age of our workforce to 50 which at one point was around the national average at 72. 16% of our Election Judges were under 25 years of age.
- We doubled the number of Korean and Vietnamese bilingual judges
- No precincts received an unsatisfactory rating on the Precinct Performance report. (Nationally recognized program)

Future Vote!

2018 Midterm Elections Highlights

- 1,500 high school students served as election workers –
(16 years and older)
- 2,250 Future Vote Ambassadors served as aides
(15 years and younger)
- 11,000 community service (volunteer hours provided to
Montgomery County voters)
- 650 community outreach events

Operations

Voter Satisfaction

- 89.9% of voters polled during early voting found the Early Voting Center "completely convenient."
- 93.1% of voters polled during Election Day found their polling place "completely convenient."
- Most voters who responded provided positive feedback saying, "thank you" for the "great experience, fantastic experience, nothing needs to change" and so on.
- Polling Place Support Program auditors from the League of Women Voters noted "although the turnout was heavy, most polling places were well laid out and operating smoothly."

Candidate Filing

- Public/Candidate interest was high. Operations staff filed a record number of candidates totaling 190 individuals.
- Public Funding was implemented for county executive and county council candidates—25 candidates were eligible to take part in the program. While our office does not administer this program, Chris Rzeszut did a great job of managing a lot of coordination with the Finance Department Section managing the Public Campaign Finance.

Supply Warehouse

- During the General Election, Ryan White managed an unprecedented number of ballots to accommodate the projected turnout—919,300 ballots equating to 2.75 million pieces of paper.
- Ryan, Chris, Jessica, Michelle, several other staff and the Department of General Services responded quickly when we discovered an error by the Printer, making sure that we minimized stub issues at the polls and proving to the State that the ballot distribution and accounting processes we use do not need ballot stubs.
- Three independent supply verifications were performed, one by the Supply Warehouse Manager, one by BOE Administrators and one by Board members to ensure that all polling places

were furnished with the appropriate materials for the conduct of the election.

- We strengthened our use of supply depots for Roamers across the county for greater and quicker responsiveness in the precincts.

Call Center

- Jessica, Laletta, Bobbie and their teams consolidated the part of our call center that handles voter calls into their front office this election, handling calls more efficiently and cost effective for the volume of calls that we had for this election.
- Eric has taken over our Help Desk and led the team in improving procedures for taking and tracking calls and made sure that we knew what was going on out there during an election that turned out to be our fourth highest turnout ever.

Polling Places

- In June 2018, there were an unparalleled number of changes in locations because of summer construction and maintenance projects; however, to ensure voters were provided convenient, alternate locations within their communities, the staff worked diligently to acquire adequate, temporary buildings. Although the changes presented a significant challenge, we minimized confusion for voters through multiple voter notification initiatives including mail and local community efforts.
- Chris Rzeszut led the way in creating a new solution for accessibility complaints reported during the primary. Staff members assessed the problem, remediated the issue and implemented a plan to create rest areas for individuals with mobility constraints and got positive feedback.
- Staff received compliments from the Montgomery County ADA Compliance Officer who visited an early voting center during the General Election. She found the location welcoming and compliant with ADA standards.

Because of a State contract change, BOE worked with new moving contracts; however, equipment delivery went extremely well with all equipment being delivered.

Voting/Absentee Services

- Voting was offered 21 days, open weekends here at the office as well as at Early Voting and Election Day. We are the only county in the State of Maryland that remains open for all 21 days.
- We are also the only county in the State of Maryland that has a mail drop for absentee or voter registration documents that allows 24 hour access.
- Transparent and well organized Recounts
- Certification timely and documents available for Board Attorney and candidate representatives
- Manual audit verified the certified election results.

Lessons Learned

Wait Times

- 236 polling locations across the County
- 179 or 76% had wait time of less than 30 minutes, most under 20 minutes.
- 45 or 19% had a wait time at peak of 35 – 55 minutes, generally in the morning, outside peak voting period there appeared to be a 15 minute wait time.
- 12 polling places had wait time exceeding one hour. The issues identified were not similar. We have already ordered new equipment and will adjust our Election Judge allocation to have more workers present where we need them. Staff presented and will continue to delve into addressing this issue of wait times.

Election Judges

- We will continue to work to improve our Standby ranks and minimize our response time to deploy Election Judges to polling places and will increase our baseline personnel requirements for busier precincts.
- We will adjust staffing including greeters to sort out non-resident voters into a Provisional Voting area to prevent events

similar to what occurred at Praisner on Election Day. This is especially necessary at locations that serve as Early Voting Centers or are near Early Voting Centers.

Communication

- We will focus our messaging for 2020 on trying to persuade voters on Election Day to vote at the assigned polling place.
- We will also focus on how we can improve our messaging to voters who request an absentee ballot and then decide to vote on Election Day, becoming a provisional voter. This may possibly be a separate mailing or more information with the ballot.
- We will do a special mailing to previous provisional voters who voted out of precinct to direct them to their correct polling place
- We will also emphasize these messages in the Sample ballot.

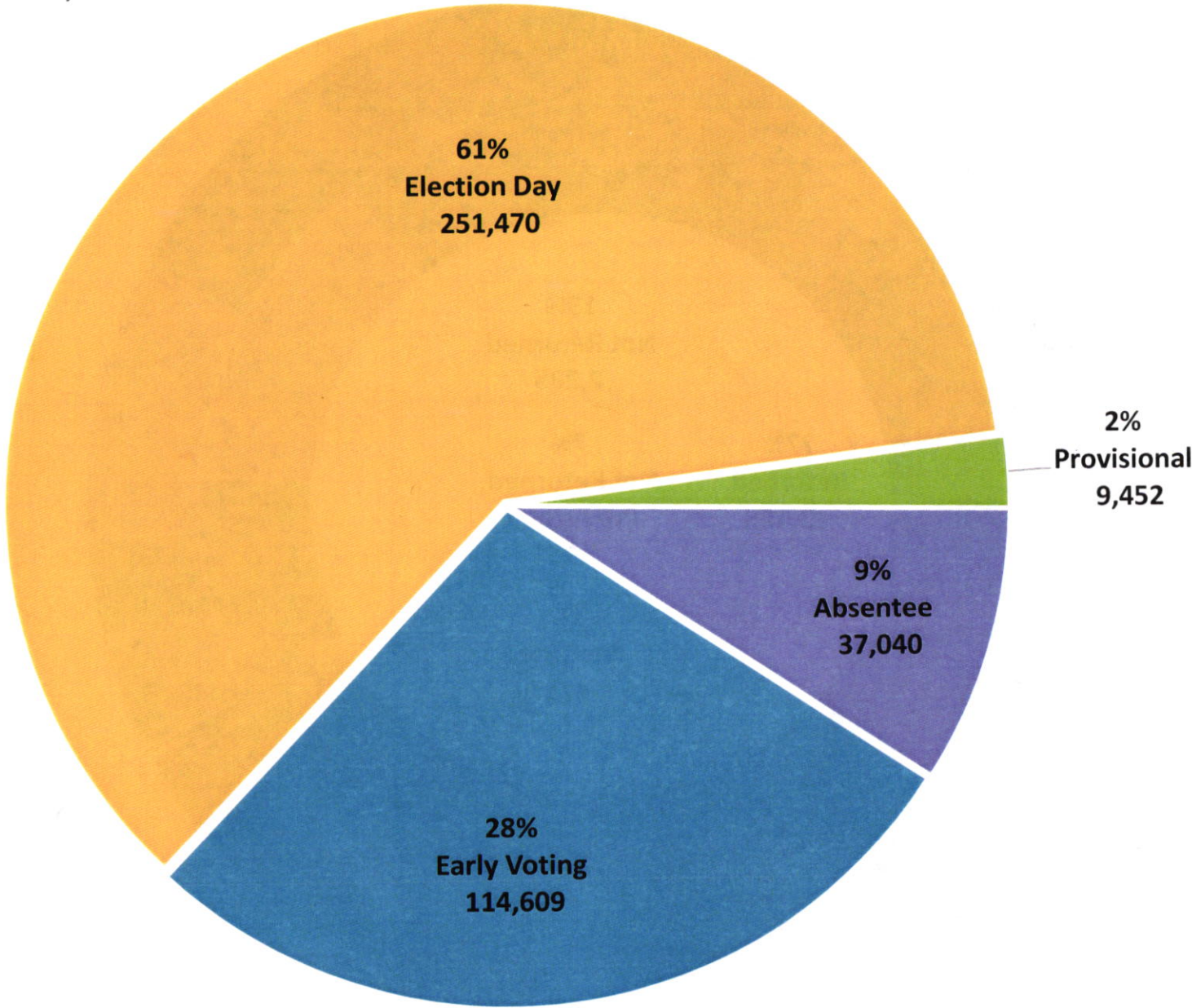
Equipment Deployment

- Ballot Marking Devices are underutilized on Election Day. Staff deployed more ballot marking devices exceeding our directives by the State Board. This needs to change as well as the process to allow voters to use it. Certification for improvements to this device has been projected for September 2019.
- We will increase equipment for the upcoming election cycle: DS 200, pollbooks, printers; carts and peripherals.
- We will explore options for increasing the speed of delivery when voting equipment goes down. The state's requirements for how to handle replacement equipment along with the geography of our county make it difficult to replace equipment quickly.
- We will work to improve Chief Judges' understanding of when and how to use the emergency bill on the scanner.

Election 2018 – By the Numbers

2018 General Turnout

Total Turnout: 412,571

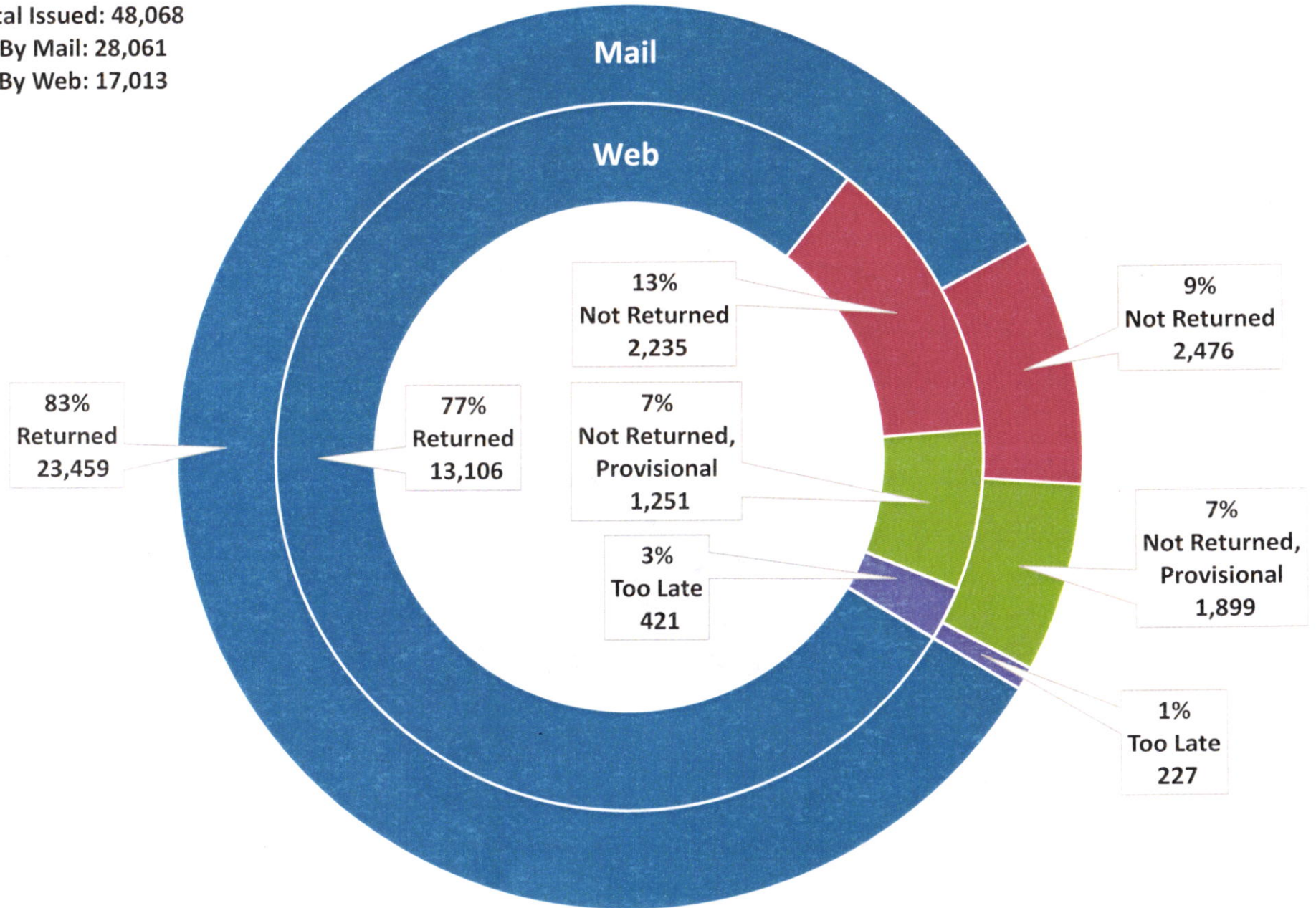


2018 General Absentee Ballots

Total Issued: 48,068

*By Mail: 28,061

*By Web: 17,013



Awards, Honors and Presentations

- You have a great team on staff. I want to say a few things to highlight the qualifications and activities of some of the staff.
- The Board of Elections staff is the hardest working group I have had the pleasure to lead and have continuously stepped up to every challenge faced in the 2018 Election Cycle and there were several.
- We have two nationally Certified Elections and Registration Administrators, Margaret and Gilberto. We will soon double that to four because Chris Rzeszut and Leslie Woods are about to receive their certification, and four employees who are in various stages of having begun the program. This program through the Election Center and Auburn University has helped build professionalism and information sharing among election administrators in small and large jurisdictions across the nation.
- The U.S. Election Assistance Commission recently requested that I serve on a Disaster Preparedness & Recovery Working Group, which I have accepted. I presented to the U.S. Election Assistance Commission in Memphis last Wednesday, reviewing the Beltway Sniper and Hurricane Sandy experience.
- Deputy Director Alysoun McLaughlin is a Vice Chair of the Election Administration Committee of the National Association of Counties, is on their Member Programs and Services Committee, and represents them on the Board of Advisors to the U.S. Election Assistance Commission. She will be going to their annual meeting next week in Salt Lake City where they will vote on the next generation of voting equipment standards. At last year's meeting, she authored and passed a resolution on usability and language access for ballot marking devices. She also represents Montgomery County in a large counties group facilitated by the Bipartisan Policy Center that meets once a year to discuss best practices for election officials in large urban counties. She has served as Vice Chair of the Maryland Association of Election Officials and as Co-Chair of the

Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments Election Officials Committee.

- Janet Ross was selected and represented large jurisdictions at the National Election Security Summit in St Louis, Missouri 9/10 – 9/11. Janet will be at the MAEO Conference working with State Board in the Table Tap Exercise for development of our internal planning. Janet is not only a former trainer so she understands the people side of elections, but she also had a long career with Verizon before joining us and has brought solid Project Management skills to her position here in Montgomery County.
- It is easy to take Leslie Woods' training program for granted until you go see how election workers are trained in other counties around the country. Our class sizes are nearly unheard of elsewhere and we are not aware of any jurisdiction that has as systematic and robust a process for evaluating poll worker performance, anywhere in the country. Leslie's program won for the Montgomery County Board of Elections a national award in the last presidential election for Election Judge program. Montgomery County is known for going it alone and doing things our own way, but she worked very closely with the state during the implementation of the new voting equipment to revamp the statewide training and bring other counties along with us, using our model to improve their programs. In a recent election in Chicago, they had one precinct with not one poll working showing up to open the polls, the vetting process developed by Leslie and her team not only meets all legal requirements but does a great job of making sure we open polls on time. Our program is designed for the potential pollworker to understand the commitment.
- Jessica Newby is also quickly becoming a state and national leader. She has served as chair of the Voter Registration Committee for the Maryland Association of Election Officials and is currently serving as chair of MAEO's State Regulatory Review Committee. She also serves on the National Election Center Postal Task Force and is flying to Indianapolis next month to

represent us at the National Postal Forum. She has also served as Co-Chair of the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments Election Officials Committee. Most importantly, she is working with our Maryland Election peers to get rid of the "ballot stub" , a serious flaw in customer service for voting.

- Chris Rzeszut is the Emergency Management specialist attending the latest training in emergency management for the purpose to coordinate the protection of the many Early Voting Centers and Polling Places in Montgomery County. While the Board may see her more in your Operational role, she is the liaison and works extensively in the background with Public Safety in planning for the "emergency".
- Eric Olsen is our newest hire at the Board of Elections. In his time here so far, he has improved our Election Day Help Desk, streamlined several processes. He has revamped the written materials including the Sample Ballot and will continue to improve upon this vehicle as an educational piece. He was co-Chair of the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments Election Officials Committee and ran a national program called Erase the Line, coordinating efforts by counties across the country to measure and reduce wait times at polls, when he worked at the DC Board of Elections. He has been bringing his expertise to that issue here in Montgomery County in recent months and is working with the Director and Operations Team to analyze the lines and wait times and review equipment allocations. Board members will see good things from that in the 2020 Presidential Election.
- Last but not least, Gilberto Zelaya, or Dr. Z, is a local celebrity in Montgomery County and has been raising his profile both statewide and nationally. He is not only Vice President of the union but is also president of the Montgomery County Hispanic Employees and has served on several task forces and advisory boards. He has been both a Board Member and Outreach Committee chair for the Maryland Association of Election Officials. His Future Vote Program is one of the largest, if not the largest, youth pollworker programs in the country, has won

multiple awards and is featured in a civic engagement toolkit by the Center for Civic Design. It won a national award from the U.S. Election Assistance Commission this year. He testified in Annapolis for the first time this year and will be speaking at the International Association of Government Officials conference this summer regarding this program.

- The risk in saying things like this about the staff is that I will have left someone off, so I will say more about other staff in future meetings, but I think it is important for you to know what a great team you have here at the Board.